

Mechanics turn wrenches to save lives

By Maj. **Robert Couse-Baker**
332nd AEW Public Affairs

TIKRIT, Iraq — Mechanics often talk about vehicle maintenance as if it were life-and-death. For the gun-truck maintainers of the 732nd Expeditionary Logistic Readiness Squadron, the idea is more than a figure of speech.

The trucks they maintain help provide convoy security, traveling some of the most brutal roads in Iraq. Breakdowns are more than an annoyance.

"Turning wrenches is basically the same here or back home," said Staff Sgt. Mel Perero, 732nd ELRS mechanic. "It's the mission that makes it different here: Every vehicle is a priority, it's got to be right every time."

Sergeant Perero, one of more than a dozen vehicle maintainers and specialists working out of a truck garage at Forward Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, near Tikrit, says the Army has been very supportive of the Air Force gun truckers and maintainers. Tech. Sgt. Richard Miller, 732nd ELRS mechanic, agrees with Sergeant Perero.

"If we've got a part, and they need it, we give it to them; if they have a part and we need it, they give it to us. We like the 101st (Airborne Division (Air Assault))," he said.

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Photo by Maj. Robert Couse-Baker

Staff Sgt. Rosalio Ruiz, 732nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron, uses an air wrench to remove components attached to a worn steering box on a 5-ton truck. Sergeant Ruiz is deployed to Forward Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

Building a better place



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Thanking controllers



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Staff Sgt. Anthony Sepongviwat, 1st RED HORSE Group, drills a beam in place.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Tammie Moore

Building a better place

Senior Airman Luis Magana (left) and Staff Sgt. Ronnie Montoya attach support beams during a construction project. Both Airman are deployed to the 557th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron at Camp Taji, Iraq. They have been forward deployed to work with the 1st RED HORSE Group at Balad Air Base.

COMMANDER'S ACTION LINE

As a service for Balad Airmen, the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing operates the Commander's Action Line program. The line is a way for Balad Air Base members to get answers to questions or express concerns about life on the base. Brig. Gen. Frank Gorenc, 332nd AEW commander, gives action line queries his personal attention.

The *Red Tail Flyer* will publish those items that are judged to be of general interest to the Balad Air Base population.

In addition to using the commander's action line, Balad Airmen are asked to remember their chain of command when dealing with problems and concerns.

The Commander's Action Line can be reached via e-mail at redtailflyer@blab.centaf.af.mil. Those using the action line should include name, unit and phone number in case additional information is needed and for a timely response.

Brig. Gen. Frank Gorenc, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing commander, serves Thanksgiving dinner to a Soldier.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Chad Watkins

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<http://www.afnews.af.mil/iraq/baladarchive/current.pdf>

Navy pilot offers thanks

I would like to show my appreciation to the men and women serving as air traffic controllers in Iraq.

As a U.S. Navy pilot, I've flown under their control many times and each time came away impressed by their level of professionalism and dedication.

Iraq is inherently dangerous, the sheer density of air traffic makes it more so. I never had any doubt that the controllers would deconflict traffic, provide separation amidst a sea of radar contacts and send me safely on my way.

Our ATC personnel are all too often overlooked for the thankless job they do. Were it not for their selfless service, my job, and those of countless other aviators, would be difficult if not impossible.

Therefore, on behalf of all the pilots who have had the good fortune to work with those controllers, I send this note of thanks for a difficult job well done. They



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Pamela Anderson

(Right to left) Staff Sgt. Christin Woodell, Senior Airman Daniel Fuentes and Senior Airman Lindsay Pace, all from the 332nd Expeditionary Operations Squadron, monitor air traffic over Balad.

were too busy saving lives most nights to say it over the radio. (*Editors note: This thank you was submitted by Navy Lt. Bryan Sory, VP-45 pilot.*)



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Pamela Anderson

Marking a milestone

Col. William "Blaze" Binger, 332nd Expeditionary Operations Group deputy commander, climbs out of an F-16 fighter aircraft shortly after breaking his 4,000 flying hours milestone, as Tech. Sgt. Denver McCullough (left) and Staff Joe Lester, both from the 332nd Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Unit, annotate post-flight information on the aircraft forms. Colonel Binger is only the 10th person in the world to accomplish such a feat in an F-16.

BALAD AIR BASE NEWS NOTES

Participate in Sports Day

The 332nd Expeditionary Services Squadron is scheduled to host Sports Day Dec. 4. Events include three on three basketball, volleyball and horseshoes at 1 p.m.; dodgeball at 2:30 p.m.; a quarterback challenge and tug-of-war at 3:30 p.m.; and a ceremony at 5 p.m. For more information or to sign up, visit the H6 Fitness Center.

Wing coins available

The new 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing coin is available for purchase at the H6 Recreation Tent. The cost is \$5.

Mailing deadlines

Individuals who wish to mail holiday greetings home should send their priority and first class letters and cards by Dec. 6.

Looking for volunteers

Individuals interested in volunteering at the post office during the holiday season should contact Capt. Steven Pena at 443-7548.

Educational opportunities

Individuals interested in earning college credit while deployed can schedule a College Level Examination Program test through the Balad Education Office. For more information, visit <http://intranet.blab.ds.af.mil/332%20SVS/Education%20Center.htm> or call 443-6953

Driving on Sapper Street

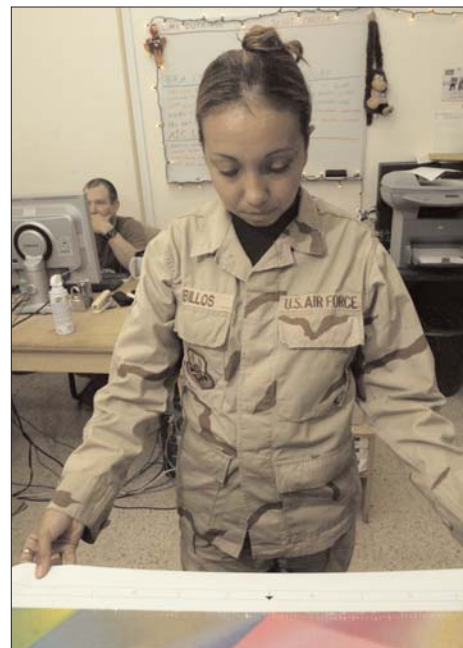
When driving west on Sapper Street drivers are reminded the first right hand turn is for vehicle inspections, the second right is for entrance to H6 and the third is for thru traffic.

Reporting injuries

Injured Airmen who seek medical treatment must complete an Air Combat Command Form 164. This form to be turned into their supervisor and forwarded to the safety office. For more information, call 443-6111.

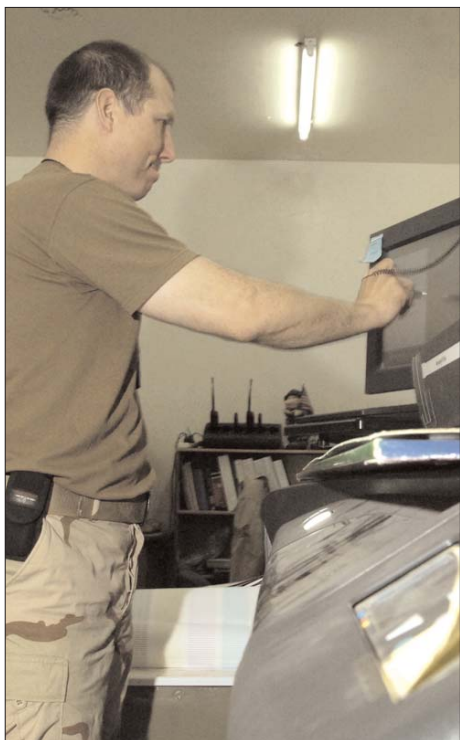


Senior Airman Angelica Cubillos, 732nd Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron, guides a map on a plotter as it is printed.



Photos by Airman 1st Class Chad Watkins

Senior Airman Angelica Cubillos, 732nd Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron, reviews a map.



Master Sgt. Bob Padick scans a document so it can be added to the continuity book. Sergeant Padick is deployed to the 732nd Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron.

Drawing up plans

By Staff Sgt. Tammie Moore
332nd AEW Public Affairs

Whether it means designing floor plans or electrical layout blueprints, members of the 732nd Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron's Detachment 15 are ready to meet the challenge and are another example of Airmen stepping up to fill Army support billets.

The 10 Airmen assigned to Det. 15 use their engineering and design skills to enhance the 30th Brigade's construction capabilities.

"Our Airmen design the projects which the Soldiers build," said Chief Master Sgt. Donald Dutridge, 732nd ECES chief of operations.

Senior Airman Angelica Cubillos, 732nd ECES engineering assistant, who has worked on roads layout and guard tower staircases for the Army. Airman Cubillos is able to assist in the design of million dollar projects by using a comput-

er aided drafting program.

Getting the designs completed and to the Army on time is the most rewarding part of the mission here, she said.

For the drafters to accomplish this work they seek the assistance of Master Sgt. Bob Padick, the Det. 15 administrator, who has undertaken many of the section's extra duties. He is the vehicle, work group and ammo manager in addition to taking care of his normal administrative duties.

"My main responsibility is making sure everyone in the shop has the materials they need to perform their jobs," Sergeant Padick said.

Despite the long hours and mentally challenging work the Airmen are very proud of what they do.

"I take pride in my work because it is ultimately for the greater good of the people I am here to help," said Senior Airman Bryan Gulley, 732nd ECES engineering assistant.



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Pamela Anderson

Playing the game

(Above) Airman 1st Class Nathan Lee, 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group, throws the ball to the first baseman.

(Left) Capt. Jason Bell, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Staff, prepares to hit the ball during a Balad baseball game.

Mechanics, from Page 1

Tech. Sgt. Miller tracks work orders and orders parts for the fleet of almost 120 Air Force vehicles. The shop's job would be huge even under the best of conditions — but conditions here are far from the best.

Tech. Sgt. Robert Kline, 732nd ELRS mechanic, said potholes and IED craters take their toll on suspension, steering and tires. And the sand is bad for everything.

"The Iraqi roads are tough, and they're especially rough on vehicles," said Master Sgt. Adam Miller, 732nd ELRS shop superintendent.

But not everything is bad. As it worked out, the shop deployed with a near even blend of youth and experience. Making the most of this mix, Master Sgt. Miller matched one junior enlisted Airman with one noncommissioned officer.

"It's worked out tremendously — every time we open a toolbox, we learn something new or re-enforce what we already knew," he said.

One more thing Master Sgt. Miller has learned, "The armor works."

On his sixth rotation since 1998, Master Sgt. Miller said they have adapted processes to meet changing conditions. For example, the Airmen don't use the



Photo by Maj. Robert Couse-Baker

Staff Sgt. Mel Perero (left) and Senior Airman Sean Johnson install a new engine in a Humvee. Mechanics assigned to the 732nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron at Forward Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, maintain armored gun trucks used by the Air Force convoy security detachment.

Army's system for multi-level maintenance, where units do the small stuff, and the heavy repair shops do the big jobs. The Airmen keep every project in-house, from new windshield wipers to new engines.

"We find it's more efficient if we do it ourselves," he said.

On one particular major job, Sergeant Perero and protégé, Senior Airman Sean Johnson, 732nd ELRS mechanic, installed a new engine in a Humvee. Sergeant Perero showed Airman Johnson some the tricks of

making the installation look and work as well — or better — than a factory job.

Airman Johnson, who previously served in the Army, clearly understands what's on the other side of the wire.

"Quality work is very important. People's lives are on the line," he said.

"Back home, one work order just turns in to another. Here, they get to see how they fit in to the organization," Master Sgt. Miller said. "This is the best training environment these guys will ever see."



Photos by Army Staff Sgt. Timothy Lawn

Airman 1st Class Christopher Kozlowski (foreground) and Senior Airman Jason Scott Hall, both from the 332nd Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, act as launch assistants to a pilot starting an F-16.

Falcon fixers

By Staff Sgt. Timothy Lawn
214th Military Public Affairs Detachment

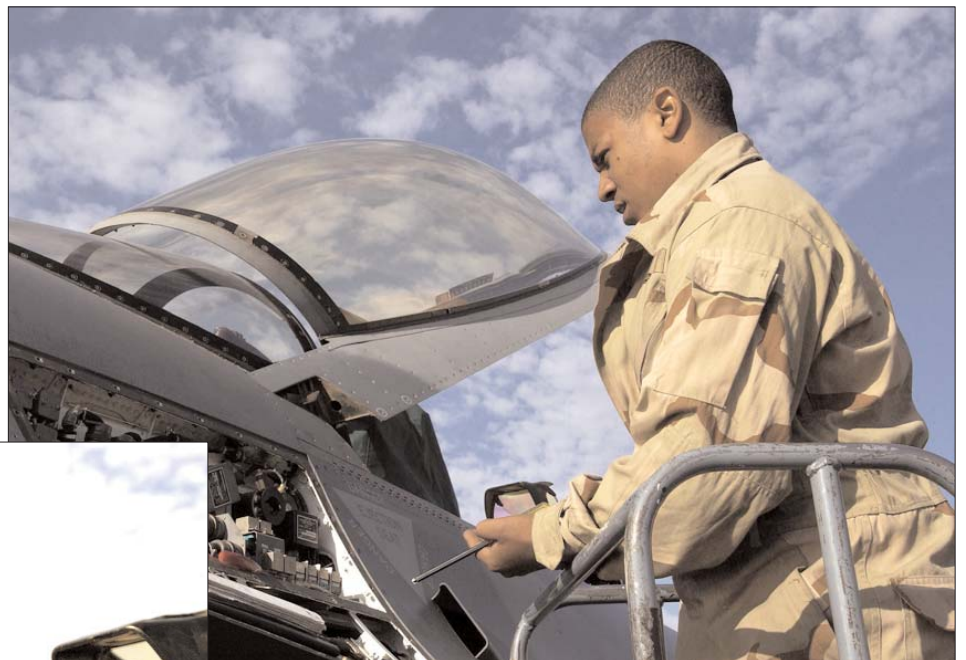
To keep the F-16s at Balad Air Base flying is a full time job for the Airmen assigned to the 332nd Expeditionary

Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

These Airmen work long hours to ensure their F-16s are ready for any mission, which enables the Balad pilots to help keep the base secure.



Staff Sgt. Heather Tufty, 332nd Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, installs a liquid oxygen converter in an F-16 that has recently returned from a mission.



(Above) Airman 1st Class Jason McKee, 332nd Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, calibrates a fuel quantity control unit for the fuel indicating system.



(Left) Senior Airman Benjamin Buehler (left to right) and Airman 1st Class Jason McKee, both the 332nd Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, troubleshoot the fuel system electronics on an F-16 fighter.

Freedom

Having the power to shape our future

By Staff Sgt. **Thomas Brick**
332nd Expeditionary Contracting Flight

Freedom is a hard concept to define at times.

Many would say freedom is yours at birth, that you are born free with the same rights everyone else has. The creator may have wanted it that way but reality is much different.

Freedom is something that you have to want for yourself. It is something you have to define for yourself.

When we are born we are not free because we are so helpless and unable to do anything for ourselves that we are dependent on our parents for everything. This really isn't freedom because we depend on others for support and are unable to make decisions for ourselves.

As we begin progressing from adolescence into adults we start to learn what freedom is. It is when we start making decisions for ourselves; but, this freedom is not without price. This freedom comes with the cost of having to live with the consequences of each action we take and each word we utter.

To me freedom is a very precious and worthwhile state of being. Freedom is

“ I invite everyone to think about what freedom is, what this powerful word means to them. Think long and hard on it, without bias or prejudice. Freedom is an extraordinary state of being, cherish it. ”

- By Staff Sgt. Thomas Brick
332nd Expeditionary Contracting Flight

not just a label or a right that politicians tout on a stage in front of supporters. It is that state of control over your own destiny. That is why freedom is worth fighting for, worth dying for. Because it is so precious and fragile it must be defended and held tight from those who would take it away.

Many people take this for granted. They walk through the streets, forests and mountains blissfully unaware of the fortune that our founding fathers have left for us.

Through the founding father's actions and steadfast persistence a nation was created that was unlike any other nation on Earth at the time or even now. The Republic they created stood for freedom and the right to find

your own destiny.

The result of all this blood, sweat and tears is a nation that allows you to live your life according to your own desires. You can become a doctor, a lawyer, a writer, a scholar or whatever you wish to become.

I love my freedom, which is why I joined the Air Force. I am happy to defend my freedoms and those of the American citizens. I am also happy to fight so people from other nations can enjoy the same freedoms we do.

I invite everyone to think about what freedom is, what this powerful word means to them. Think long and hard on it, without bias or prejudice. Freedom is an extraordinary state of being, cherish it.

BALAD AIR BASE

UNIFORM TIPS

Cold weather camouflage Gortex is authorized with all utility uniforms at any time. The jacket may be worn with Air Force physical training gear as weather dictates. Rank will remain on the jacket at all times. All zippers and buttons will be secured. Guidelines on Gortex wear can be found in 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Instruction 36-2903 [Dress and Personal Appearance Standards], section two.

Balad AB Religious Schedule

Protestant - Traditional

Sundays
9:30 a.m. Provider Chapel, 10 a.m. Freedom Chapel, 5:30 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Protestant - Gospel

Sundays
11 a.m. - Sustainer Indoor Theater, 11:30 Freedom Chapel, 7 p.m. - Provider Chapel

Protestant- Praise and Worship

Sundays
9:30 a.m. Sustainer Indoor Theater, 6:30 p.m. Moral and Warfare Recreation Tent 29th SPT BN
Sundays and Wednesdays

7 p.m. Freedom Chapel

Protestant - Contemporary

Sundays
10 a.m. 299th FSB Tent Chapel, 11 a.m. Town Hall
Latter Day Saints

Sundays

1p.m. Provider Chapel, 7 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Liturgical- Protestant

Sundays

7:30 a.m. Hospital, 8 a.m. Provider Chapel
Samoan Congregational Service

Sundays

4 p.m. Provider Chapel

Roman Catholic Mass

Mondays through Fridays

7 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Saturdays

5 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (4:45 p.m. Reconciliation)

Sundays

8:30 a.m. Freedom Chapel, 9 a.m. Tuskegee Chapel, 11 a.m. Provider Chapel, 3:30 p.m. "626" Chapel (for Special Ops personnel only)

Church of Christ

Sunday

2 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Islamic Prayer

Fridays

1:30 p.m. Provider Chapel

Jewish Prayer

Fridays

6:30 p.m. Provider Chapel Annex

Know what this is?



Photo by Staff Sgt. Tammie Moore

If you can identify the object, send us an e-mail at red-tailflyer@blab.centaf.af.mil. Last week's photo was first identified by Senior Airman Cecily Okimura, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, as a NOVA water box label.



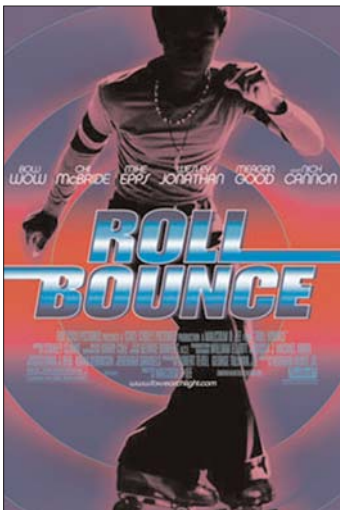
Photo by Staff Sgt. Tammie Moore

Silent Heroes

Staff Sgt. Clifford Millette, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron, is this week's "Silent Hero." He was chosen because he remained professional but firm while establishing a cordon around a suspicious package, said Command Chief Master Sgt. Layton Clark, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing command chief.

Sustainer movie schedule

Schedule is subject to change



Today

There will be no movies today.
8 p.m. - Aaron Tippin concert

Saturday, Nov. 26

3 p.m. - The Transporter 2
6 p.m. - Get Rich or Die Tryin'
(Premiere showing)
9 p.m. - The Man

Sunday, Nov. 27

3 p.m. - Get Rich or Die Tryin'
6 p.m. - Just Like Heaven
9 p.m. - Roll Bounce

Monday, Nov. 28

3 p.m. - The Man
6 p.m. - Get Rich or Die Tryin'

9 p.m. - The Transporter 2

Tuesday, Nov. 29

3 p.m. - Just Like Heaven
6 p.m. - Cry Wolf
9 p.m. - Get Rich or Die Tryin'

Wednesday, Nov. 30

3 p.m. - The Man
6 p.m. - Get Rich or Die Tryin'
9 p.m. - Roll Bounce

Thursday, Dec. 1

3 p.m. - Harry Potter
6 p.m. - Harry Potter 2
9 p.m. - Harry Potter 3
Midnight - Harry Potter 4
(Premiere showing)

